

The Coming Day.

JANUARY, 1898.

THE NEW YEAR'S MORNING STAR.

TREAD softly ! Some one is dying.
'Tis the Old Year,—sighing, sighing.
He is old, but tender-hearted :
He mourns for the departed ;—
For children's faces,
Lost to these earthly places :
For mothers good,
Lost to the little brood :
For lovers who left our nest,
And crept through night to rest.
He is thinking of the sorrows he has seen,
Of the days of darkness that have been.
And now he is dying,—
Sighing, sighing.
But see ! He smiles ! The dull eyes glisten !
Listen ! Listen !

‘ Children, misread me not !
I do not grieve
Because your human lot
Is folded round with pain,
But that the shrouded brain
Does not believe
The truth I never ceased to tell,—
That in the dear Lord's garden all is well.
Nothing is lost, but all transfigured are.
Look up ! and trust the New Year's Morning Star ! ’

A SUMMONS FOR THE NEW YEAR.

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SPOKEN AT CROYDON.
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'The Lord said unto Abram—Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee.' — Genesis xii. 1.

It does not at all matter to us, in what way Abram believed God said this to him. The point of the statement for us is not that God said it but that a brave, earnest devout man believed it. This is the only way in which we can profitably read these ancient records. They are full of the tremendous claim, that God said this and commanded that. Perhaps the men of old times really believed it: but it seems plain to us that what to them was a divine call was really nothing but a strong impulse. With their great faith in God and their marvellous trust in Him as the God nigh at hand and not afar off, it seemed to them quite natural that God should move them: and it only seemed an act of natural piety to accept the mighty inward impulse as the expression of His will. They asked for guidance, and they believed they got it: and often rightly so.

It was undoubtedly true of the prophets that their great phrase, 'Thus saith the Lord,' was the product of this unquestioning acceptance of the inward voice as the veritable voice of God. In no other way can we imagine God speaking to man.

So, in the case before us, it seemed to Abram the will of God that he should go to seek a new home: and he went forth, not knowing whither he went; but moved from within by that which seemed to be a voice, and beckoned onward from without by that which seemed to be a hand. And this view of the call of Abram is not affected by the touching statement that he had to leave his 'kindred,' his 'country,' and his 'father's house.' For, how often is it true that earnest men are called by circumstances and moved by inward impulses to do that which is quite equal to this forsaking of country, kindred and home? No call comes at midnight; no voice is heard in the day; no miracle

is wrought, to lay the message at the door: but the brave soul is constrained to strike his tent and seek an abiding place elsewhere. How often, and how distinctly, this is the case with those who feel compelled to break away from the faith they have been taught to reverence, and the Church they have been trained to love! Not a few of us who are here, worshiping God together to-day, know something of this. We had a great love for the fathers of our faith—for the mighty souls who held it in days gone by,—for the sweet singers who sang its praise, and set even harshness of thought to music, and made severity sound like mercy,—for the saintly souls who lived and died in it, and made the way seem straight from earth to heaven. We did not love to break away from the grand old line of march: we did not want to leave the sublime old temple to set up our little modern tent: we did not want to feel ourselves aliens and strangers where we had been used to feel ourselves at home: we did not want to lose the ancient prayers, the glorious music, the venerable confessions, the noble memories, the saintly examples, the beautiful lives. And, when the voice came, when we felt moved to go forth, the call sounded just like this—‘Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee.’

But the call was perhaps even more direct, and more penetrating still. It perchance called upon us, not only to break away from an ancient faith, a venerable and a glorious band of saintly souls, but to depart even from our actual kindred, and literally from our father’s house. For some have known even that bitterness: and the words of our brother Jesus have come true—‘I am come to set the parent against the child, and the child against the parent.’ It is sad, but it is necessary: and the only comfort we have is, that it is a part of the great process of human growth: since progress necessitates departure and change.

The misery in this is, that men do not see the need of change, and do not perceive the law of progress at work. Hence, they insist upon remaining where they are, rebel against all change for themselves, and suspect or hate it in others,—

nay! go so far as to strike at the pilgrim who goes forth staff in hand. This chapter in the history of the world is its saddest. God and Nature say,—‘Get thee out—to a land that I will show thee’—and yet, woe be to him who obeys! His obedience shall be counted disobedience; his loyalty shall be denounced as rebellion; his fidelity shall be called infidelity; and, when he goes forth and returns with news of the good land beyond, bringing with him rich clusters of new fruits, he will be only reviled and hated: and, with the very grapes of God in his hands, he will be deemed a God-forsaken child of presumption and unbelief.

But time is the great vindicator: and the hated, despised and suspected names become the revered and the beloved: and, when the wind at last destroys for ever the old tabernacle, and the rains rot the old tree, men are glad to seek the temple which the heretics built, and the tree which they first planted and then watered with their blood or tears. All history proves it, and the times in which we live are plainly furnishing another illustration of it; even as one of our modern prophets, himself one of the strong builders of the Church of the future—one of the advance-guard of humanity—has put this, in a noble parable concerning the tree, which, in time, dwindled and bore no more fruit, though they fed it with the blood of those who told the truth about it. Then they made leaves and fruit of wax and paper, and painted them; and many were satisfied, but some loathed the sham, and left it: and those who remained were content; for, having lived so long with a falsehood, they lost the sense of truth: and they said the tree would do well enough; but, stem and boughs and paper leaves, it is dry for the burning; and, if the fire touches it, those who sit beneath it will suffer.

There is something in this parable inexpressibly touching and almost saddening: but nothing could better describe the truth. For, at this hour, men are still sitting by the old tree, amid whose dead or dying branches the wind is sighing: and they are trying to graft upon it newer, stronger, and more living shoots: or they hang painted leaves and blossoms on it, and call that beautiful

which is rotten at the core : or they shut their eyes to the fact, and would fain persuade themselves and their children that the tree had always been as it is now. And, all this while, the old faith is dying, and, lo ! the good God has prepared the new.

Would to God that the change could come about to the music of rejoicing voices and exulting hearts ! Would to God that His messengers could be believed, and that His prophets could escape stoning and the cross ! But, if that cannot be, then God grant to those who are called to go on before, the visions of seers, the tongues of prophets, the courage of martyrs, and the lives of saints,—that the new temple may be built with strength and beauty too, so that our children, when they hear the call, may not need to leave their father's house and their kindred any more !

THE NATION'S CHURCH AND HOW THE NATION HAS LOST IT.

THE ACT OF TOLERATION.

SPOKEN AT CROYDON.

V.

THE Act of Toleration was passed on the 24th of May, 1689 ; really a poor affair, but still an acknowledgment that even then the Act of Uniformity was a failure. It only said ; ' We will not harry and imprison you ; you shall not be treated on a level with foxes and wild game : ' though it admitted that Nonconformists had a right to live and call their souls their own. But the odious and insolent Test and Corporation Acts still kept Nonconformists between the mill-stones, and were not repealed until 1828. The intention of these Acts was to exclude Nonconformists from holding any office under Government, or under any Corporation, by setting up, as a *sine qua non*, the taking of the Sacrament according to the ritual of the State Church, a rank injustice and a deliberate bid for blasphemous dishonesty.

The Toleration Act did not extend to Roman Catholics and Unitarians. To deny the Trinity was left as a punishable offence. Only in 1813 was the Toleration Act made to include Unitarians. Only in 1844 were they made secure in the possession of their meeting places. Only in 1836 could a marriage take place in any chapel; and, even now, the Registrar has to be present to watch, and, if necessary, to interfere!

The Act of Toleration did three chief things:—It relieved the general body of Nonconformists from the laws which forcibly prevented them assembling for religious worship in their own way. It recognised, in a way, Nonconformist ministers: *i.e.*, Church and State tolerated them. It relieved Nonconformists from penalties for absenting themselves from Church. But these indulgences were greatly narrowed by two restrictions, even as regards those who were admitted to the benefits of the Act. All tolerated Nonconformists were required to take the oath of allegiance, and subscribe a declaration against Popery: and all tolerated Nonconformist ministers had to subscribe to all the 39 Articles, except 3 or 4. But even these small concessions were obtained only after violent opposition. As usual, the men in power, or the men who could never trust the people, howled against the very word 'toleration.' The judicially-minded Hallam, in his 'Constitutional History of England,' draws attention to the fact that the aristocracy and the bishops hated the very thought of admitting the right of a Nonconformist to stand aside unpunished. He quotes several of the many fierce publications on the Church side, and says;—

One of these, entitled *The Zealous and Impartial Protestant*, 1681, after much invective, says 'Liberty of conscience and toleration are things only to be talked of and pretended to by those that are under; but none like or think it reasonable that are in authority. 'Tis an instrument of mischief and dissettlement, to be courted by those who would have change, but no way desirable by such as would be quiet, and have the government undisturbed. For it is not consistent with public peace and safety without a standing army; conventicles being eternal nurseries of sedition and rebellion.' p. 30. 'To strive for toleration,' he says in another place, 'is to contend against all government. It will come to this; whether there should be a government in the church or not? for if there be a

government there must be a law; if there be laws, there must be penalties annexed to the violation of those laws; otherwise the government is precarious and at every man's mercy; that is, it is none at all The constitution should be made firm, whether with any alterations or without them, and laws put in punctual vigorous execution. Till that is done all will signify nothing. The church hath lost all through remissness and non-execution of laws; and by the contrary course things must be reduced, or they never will. To what purpose are parliaments so concerned to prepare good laws, if the officers who are intrusted with the execution neglect that duty, and let them lie dead? This brings laws and government into contempt, and it were much better the laws were never made; by these the dissenters are provoked, and being not restrained by the exacting of the penalties, they are fiercer and more bent upon their own ways than they would be otherwise. But it may be said the execution of laws of conformity raiseth the cry of persecution; and will not that be scandalous? Not so scandalous as anarchy, schism, and eternal divisions and confusions both in church and state. Better that the unruly should clamour, than that the regular should groan, and all should be undone.' p. 33. Another tract, 'Short Defence of the Church and Clergy of England, 1679,' declares for union (in his own way), but against a comprehension, and still more a toleration. 'It is observable that whereas the best emperors had made the severest laws against all manner of sectaries, Julian the apostate, the most subtle and bitter enemy that Christianity ever had, was the man that set up this way of toleration.' p. 87. Such was the temper of this odious faction. And, at the time they were instigating the government to fresh severities, by which, I sincerely believe, they meant the pillory or the gallows (for nothing else was wanting), scarce a goal in England was without nonconformist ministers. One can hardly avoid rejoicing that some of these men, after the revolution, experienced, not indeed the persecution, but the poverty they had been so eager to inflict on others.

'In the Parliament of 1680, a bill to relieve protestant dissenters from the penalties of the 35th of Elizabeth, the most severe act in force against them, having passed both houses, was lost off the table of the house of lords, at the moment that the king came to give his assent; an artifice by which he evaded the odium of an explicit refusal. Meanwhile the nonconforming ministers, and in many cases their followers, experienced a harrasing persecution under the various penal laws that oppressed them; the judges, especially in the latter part of this reign, when some good magistrates were gone, and still more the justices of the peace, among whom a high-church ardour was prevalent, crowding the gaols with the pious confessors of puritanism.'

How, then, came the Toleration Act to be passed? The truth is it was an astute move of the king's, and of the king's friends. It was an attempt to strengthen the king against the Clerical and the Tory parties, still very sulky, and by no means disposed to fall in with the new order of things. Many of these took no pains to disguise from William and Mary that they were no choice of theirs.

'In such circumstances, the industrious merchants and shopkeepers of London (who, to a large extent, were Nonconformists and Liberals), were worth holding out a hand to; and so strong and solid a body were they that the King would even have gone the length of making the Church broad enough to include them. Bare toleration, however, was all he could secure.'

Not for its own sake, then, as ending in itself, is the Act of Toleration greatly memorable, but as an immensely important turning point in the history of religious liberty. It was the real reply of experience to the Act of Uniformity, passed only 27 years before. That Act required every teacher of religion to bind himself down to one set of doctrines, to one mode of worship, and to one authority to teach. It was monstrous, and 2,000 brave and honest men left their livings rather than submit to it.

Many good Churchmen have seen the folly and enormity of it. Notably, Archdeacon Hare said;—

It was required that every minister—not only such as might be ordained thenceforward, but all who at that time had any benefice or promotion—should solemnly declare their 'unfeigned assent and consent to all and everything contained and prescribed in and by the Book of Common Prayer.' This straight-waistcoat for men's consciences could scarcely have been devised except by persons themselves of a seared conscience and hard heart—by persons ready to gulp down any oath, without scruple about more or less. Verily, when I think of that calamitous and unprincipled Act—of the men by whom it was enacted—Charles II. and the aristocracy and gentry of his reign—of the holy men against whom it was enacted—it seems almost like a prologue to the profligacy and infidelity which followed closely upon it.

But what were its direct effects with regard to the unity of the Church? It bore the name of Uniformity on its forehead. Can there have been any who persuaded themselves that a uniformity so enforced would be a means of unity?

The only unity that could have ensued from it would have been that of a dead level; and full of woe as have been the consequences of this Act in its *failure*, they would have been still more terrible had it *succeeded*.

It did not succeed. It failed, and it is failing. The passing of the Act of Uniformity only hastened the Act of Toleration of Nonconformity: for Nonconformity was the uprising of the free spirit of England against mental and spiritual tyranny: and men and women became Nonconformists, not for the sake of a better creed, but for the sake of dear freedom and personal faith. They said;—‘We want to believe in God, not in what your legal articles and creeds say about God. We want to worship God, not to go through an appointed round of legal forms.’ They made a fine stand against the bondage of the letter, and upheld the supremacy of the soul. But, in truth, they hardly knew what they were doing. They built greater than they knew. There was more in their message than they understood. They were but day-labourers who saw nothing of the glorious temple that would arise from the foundation they laid so firm and strong and true. But we stand firm because of what these great hearts did.

But think of it now. These tolerated Englishmen, these free, progressive but suspected and guarded Englishmen, were the very life-blood of the country—or its vigorous beating heart—as indeed they are to-day. Tolerate them!

How much of the history of England, on its noblest and most progressive sides, would have been otherwise but for them!—for these sturdy spirits, the ‘tolerated’ people, who, from the sycophants and the lounging wits and the fine ladies and gentlemen in possession, had to suffer many things, who had to bear hard names and harder blows in witnessing to the truth. They were called rebels, schismatics, vulgar intruders, but they were England’s saviours,—these despised Dissenters!

I know the State Church has had her eloquent preachers, her glorious poets, her brilliant scholars. I know she is venerable for something more than age, and delightful for something more than her painted glass and pretty robes; but this I say,

that even her history would have been a less noble one but for Baxter and Doddridge, Watts and Wesley, aye! and but for Priestley, Fox and Penn: for the sturdy and restless activities of these men have done more to keep the State Church itself from sloth and decay than all the hirelings that clung to her for reward.

'Tolerate' them! Why these tolerated people have initiated or supported every reform; have swiftly found their natural home by the side of the hunted and oppressed: have made a stand against class rule of every kind, and shewn their rulers the way to base law and order on the solid rocks of freedom and equality. And to-day, with all the wealth, the grandeur, the popularity and the prestige of the Church, it is true that from our Protestant Nonconformity, the fullest and freshest tides of life in England flow.

And that is easy to understand: for Nonconformity still stands for freedom and vigour, for the onward forces in the nation's life. In politics it is prophetic: and, in relation to religion, it still protests that man's supremest right is—to call his soul his own.

‘THUS SAITH THE LORD.’

AN UNCONVENTIONAL INQUIRY INTO THE ORIGIN,
STRUCTURE AND AUTHORITY OF THE OLD
TESTAMENT.

[A Revised Edition of Seven Lectures by
J. Page Hopps.]

VI.

The Prophets.—The Book of Ezekiel.

We ought not to attempt to disguise the very serious conclusions to which we have come respecting the Old Testament. If it is not ‘the word of God,’ what is it? If, when it says, ‘Thus saith the Lord,’ the Lord did not speak, who did? If, when God is said to have appeared, He did not appear, what was it that was seen? Or is it all a mere romance?

Now the truth is that, hitherto, the rationalists, though they have been splendid critics, have never given an explanation of the supreme fact of the Old Testament. It is full of the records of spirit-voices, spirit-messages, spirit-unveilings, spirit-action; and it is all attributed to one source,—the Almighty God. This, the rationalists have repudiated, but they have never explained it; and so, for the most part, they have been driven to the inference that the Old Testament is a mixture of fable, allegory, romance, delusion and fraud; or they have simply ignored it. But they have never accounted for it. The truth is they have lost the key: and now, with the help of the Book of Ezekiel, I propose to find it, and to prove that it is the key.

This Book is a strong 'case in point,' and supplies us with a vivid instance of the real significance of the Old Testament phrase, 'Thus saith the Lord.' It has been the perplexity of divines, the puzzle of critics, the difficulty of commentators, and the stumbling-block of devout and gentle souls. Its stupendous visions, its amazing symbols, its fiery rhetoric, its startling, not to say disgusting, incidents, its all-pervading mysticism, have long made the Book a very difficult one. It does not lend itself easily to the sentimental allegoriser who can find Christ and the Church in the Song of Solomon; and it is as a stone between the teeth of the rationaliser who has proved himself so adroit in cracking the nuts presented to him by isolated records of 'miracles' and dreams. The reason seems to me to be perfectly obvious:—the key has been lost. The truth is that the only persons who are at all likely or able to understand this puzzling Book are those who know something practically of what is known as *Spiritualism*. Ezekiel was simply what is now called a 'medium.' He was clairvoyant and clairaudent. He was a seer, a trance speaker, and a writing medium. He lived at the time of the captivity under the Chaldeans, and was most likely one of those who were carried away. Living in such troublous times, and (if there is truth in such things) probably influenced by spirits who took a passionate interest in the affairs of the Jews, both

at home and in captivity, he was open to all kinds of influences, good and bad, sane and deleterious, sublime and ridiculous. The amazing blunder was and is—the putting everything down to Jehovah; a piece of folly that few practised spiritualists would be guilty of, who, when ‘communications’ come from Socrates, or Shakspeare, or Milton, always have their doubts.

Here, then, at last, we may probably find the secret of the wonderful and supernatural-looking Jew,—the secret, too, of these wonderful and supernatural-looking writings. It is quite possible that the ‘peculiar’ make of the Hebrew made him receptive and responsive to spirit-influences, and that this gave him the characteristics that made him one of the riddles of the world. This accounts for his inspirational history, his religious sensitiveness and fervour, his mysterious career, and the intensely spiritual and passionately prophetic character of his sacred writings. This, too, accounts for the degradations and the upsoarings, the folly and the wisdom, the grossness and the grandeur of the various ‘revelations’ that came to him: since nothing is more certain than that openness to spirit-influence, so far from necessarily leading to truth and wisdom, may quite as easily lead to falsehood and folly.

The one little sentence,—*Ezekiel was a spirit-medium*—explains the whole book. He held regular seances; and the description of them in his book will be familiar to every spiritualist. A few instances will suffice to show this. In chapter viii., 1, we read, ‘And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat before me, that the hand of the Lord God fell there upon me.’ This phrase ‘I sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat before me’ is, in the circumstances, a perfect description of a seance. The same formula occurs in other places. Chapter xiv., 1, 2;—‘Then came certain of the elders of Israel unto me, and sat before me, and the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.’ Chapter xx., 1, 2;—‘And it came to pass in the seventh year, in the fifth month, the tenth day of the month, that certain of the elders of Israel

came to enquire of the Lord, and sat before me. Then came the word of the Lord unto me, saying, 'To enquire of the Lord' means—to consult the spirit at a *séance* ('sat before me.')

In fact, the whole Book consists of a collection of records of spirit seances and spirit messages, and of visions and clairvoyant or other occult experiences. The description in chapter ii., 1, 2, is one that will remind every spiritualist of what continually happens with a 'speaking medium':— 'And he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee. And the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me.' The only difference is that when the modern 'speaking medium' is put by the spirit into the trance, and is made to stand on his feet, he is, as a rule, though not always, unconscious, and does *not* hear him who speaks.

The Book contains many touching and devout messages of expostulation, warning and entreaty; but a great many of the messages are coarse, vulgar and ridiculous, as in the case of the long and disgusting comparison of the nation to a harlot (chapters xvi. and xxiii). Even more disgusting is the command of the spirit recorded in chapter iv., in which Ezekiel is told to bake a cake with human dung for fuel, and is only allowed cows' dung after expostulating with 'the Lord.' If such a command came to a medium now, it would be laughed at or recoiled from; or, if any medium was foolish enough to take it as coming from God, and to attempt compliance with it, the very people who now look upon this Book of Ezekiel as 'the word of God' would be the first to advise a lunatic asylum. But it would be difficult to say why John Smith in London to-day should be pronounced insane for believing and doing what an inspired prophet of Jehovah is said to have believed and done in Chaldea 2,400 years ago.

All this will, of course, be regarded by many as profane; but the real question is:—Is it true?

The case of Ezekiel does not stand alone, though it is a conspicuous one. The Bible is full of records of spirit intercourse—even to the 'calling up' of the so-called dead, as in the case

of Samuel and the witch of Endor. The attempts to put down witchcraft were simply attempts to put down irregular and perhaps obnoxious spirit-intercourse; but the attempts to put it down proved that it was believed to exist. When the boy Samuel heard the voice, it was not regarded as anything very wonderful; but it was taken at once as the voice of the Lord. Perhaps if the voice had spoken elsewhere, and outside of the recognised sphere of spirit-intercourse, it would have been denounced as demoniacal. And this suggests one of the gravest considerations. What we really find all along is a bare assumption that 'the Lord' is speaking. In reality, there is always a conflict between voice and voice. In this very Book of Ezekiel, the strongest messages are those that are directed against opposition prophets. Chapter xiii. is entirely taken up with a violent philippic against these:—'And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel that prophesy, and say thou unto them that prophesy out of their own hearts; Hear ye the word of the Lord; Thus saith the Lord God; Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing! O Israel, thy prophets are like the foxes in the deserts. Ye have not gone up into the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord. They have seen vanity and lying divination, saying; The Lord saith: and the Lord had not sent them: and they have made others to hope that they would confirm the word. Have ye not seen a vain vision, and have ye not spoken a lying divination, whereas ye say; The Lord saith it: albeit I have not spoken? Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Because ye have spoken vanity, and seen lies, therefore, behold, I am against you, saith the Lord God.' Now, from this it is plain that these other prophets also spoke in the name of 'the Lord'; and we have only Ezekiel's word for it that he alone was a genuine medium for the messages of 'the Lord.' It is a pity we have not got a record of what the other claimants said, that we might compare their messages with his. Surely they said nothing worse

than what we find in Ezekiel's Book, at chapter iv. But, in truth, we have never enough considered the case of the so-called 'false prophets.' Continually we find that there is antagonism between prophet and prophet—each one claiming to speak for God, and denouncing the other as not 'sent,' not spoken to, or spoken to only by an evil spirit. But may not that suggest the explanation? Perhaps it was not pretender against prophet, or imposter against medium: it was, perhaps, only spirit against spirit, inspiration against inspiration: and this may be held in company with the belief that there really *was* perhaps one strong militant spirit who took the Hebrew nation under his charge, but who found it immensely difficult to keep the upper hand. In that case, the Jehovah of the Jews was no other than a finite spirit or band of spirits of very limited and variable power.

This somewhat startling suggestion receives considerable support when we look closely into this subject of prophetic inspiration. It is a by no means uncommon thing to find that the so-called 'false prophet' is said to be made such by Jehovah himself. The well-known instance, in the 22nd chapter of the first book of Kings, is sufficient to prove this point. The true prophet, Micaiah, is here represented as reporting a scene he had witnessed in the spirit-world. 'I saw the Lord,' he said, 'sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left. And the Lord said; Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said; I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him; Wherewith? And he said; I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said; Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth and do so. Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee.' Nothing could be plainer. The 'false prophets' were made such by Jehovah himself, for the pur-

pose of destroying these unfortunate kings who had displeased him ! Who could this Jehovah be ?

Apart from this subject of spirit-intercourse, not only the Book of Ezekiel, but the whole of the Old Testament is a sealed book ; but, with the light that this subject can throw upon it, it is exceedingly instructive, and everywhere clear. Turn where we will, we find indications of this intercourse between the visible and invisible spheres ; and only the enormous assumption that the whole of these multitudinous records are fraudulent, or fanciful, or merely symbolical, will dispose of the inference that in the days of the ancient Hebrews spirit-intercourse was regarded as an almost every-day event. 'The angel of the Lord' is never long absent from the record. He appears, so that he can be seen or felt : he speaks : he comes in vision : he acts as leader, guardian, inspirer : he works what we should call *miracles* : he actually wrestles with one of the patriarchs, who fancies he has 'seen God face to face.' Sometimes, only a vivid light is seen : or a bush glows with a glory that does not consume ; or a hand appears—part of which is seen writing a word of doom. But why multiply instances ? The Bible is full of it, and this Book of Ezekiel is only a striking instance. The spirit-appearances ; the spirit-lights ; the sounds ; the trance-speaking ; the symbolism ; the intense feeling, and the peremptory style of the messages ; the dignity ; the pathos ; the authority ; the vulgarity ; the imbecility, are all perfectly familiar to the spiritualist, or to those who are acquainted with modern spiritualism.

What has to be chiefly taken note of is, that whereas modern spiritualists know that spirits are not necessarily either wise or good, Ezekiel seems to have committed the grave mistake of taking everything for granted, and everything as from God ; and nineteenth century Christians back him up ! What is our duty, then ? Our duty is to follow the wise advice of the apostle John, when he says ; 'Believe *not* every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God.' If we do that, we shall find the true use of this very remarkable Book of Ezekiel, as a record of intensely interesting instances of spirit-intercourse in ancient times ;

but, if we do that, we shall also be saved from the preposterous superstition of imagining that the Book contains a series of veritable revelations from the all-wise God. Above all, we shall find the key to the Bible itself, and discover the true significance of the puzzling but familiar phrase: '*Thus saith the Lord.*'

‘THE RAKE’S PROGRESS’: OR THE GREAT REFUSAL.

THE people at the head of our affairs are going at a good pace, and the Solicitor General's carefully calculated hint as to conscription has already done something to hasten it. We predicted it, as the logical outcome of the sort of Jubilee that was presented to us,—a rank display of fighting men and their tools.

It is the old, old story;—Excite the people, and bleed them. Tickle them with a show, and tax them. Sneer at the old ‘cant’ about ‘Peace, Retrenchment and Reform’! Then, under cover of ‘Patriotism,’ pile up armaments and call out for men. It is a species of national or political drunkenness which every now and then afflicts us, from which and from some of the consequences of which a sober Liberal government has to deliver us. On the continent, this debauch of soldiering is always going on: with what results we know. Do we want to get into their messes? We shall be told that if other people arm, we must arm too. It is a stale device where it is not a crude delusion. This process of snarling at one another is one of the absurdest survivals of the primeval forests. It leads to nothing but the crash;—as in the case of a thunderstorm, which is simply the result of the concentration of forces. What geese we are to stand it!—what fools to positively like it!

A few years ago, England had before her a glorious path. The continent, groaning under its self-imposed burdens, was bitterly feeling the curse of militarism and the need of repose and peace. What it wanted was—an example and a moral support; and England could have given it. We

were then the strongest and most respected power in Europe, not because of our army and our fleet, but because the common-sense and the conscience of Europe recognised our commercial, political and moral leadership. What was then wanted was a strong and steady lead in the direction of a peaceful policy and national righteousness. If England had taken the lead in that sense, and adhered to it, the moral and political effect of it could not have failed to be felt everywhere. But we failed; and, during the past few years, we have disastrously failed. We have joined the most vulgar of the military despots, in the policy of bluster and swagger and grab: and even the despots, recognising in a rough way the sacrifice of our higher role, despise us accordingly.

The perilous increase of the odious buccaneering spirit in this country demands serious attention. We gloss it over with such swelling phrases as 'the extension of the Empire,' 'the instinct of Imperialism,' 'British supremacy,' and the like, but the old experts at this sort of thing on the continent only take our phrases as aggravations of our offence; and even one of our champion buccaneers sneers at our 'unctuous rectitude.' In India, we are simply exploiting the country in the interests of restless military adventurers and ripening pensioners. In Egypt we are but slightly veiled raiders and robbers. In South Africa we are still more or less openly plotting against the very existence of two hopeful young Republics, and seem only to wait for the invention of an excuse, to try to wipe them out. In short, we are doing what any common despot or military gang could do, and are neglecting or positively forfeiting the splendid role open to us. What should have been a glorious symbol of England's true influence, was, at the Jubilee, turned into a vulgar naval and military swagger, with just a little formal flourish of musical and spectacular thanksgiving thrown in, on passing the steps of St. Paul's.

It is a bad dream. When will England awake?

THE DEVIL'S WORK IN INDIA.

THE pushful people of 'The forward policy' and the swaggering people of the 'Punitive expedition' must be a good deal disconsolate. If we do not talk of 'defeat,' it is only because of our pride and because we can boast that with our death-dealing machines we have crushed out many lives, and burnt down vast numbers of homes; and because we have destroyed or stolen an enormous quantity of food absolutely necessary for the mountaineers and their families during the horrible winter. O yes! we had almost forgotten; we do not talk of 'defeat' also, because, having scuttled out of that frozen region, we are just able to prevent the natives coming down to their usual winter quarters, and can, therefore, secure their destruction by cold and starvation in the mountains. What a devilish business! We talk of these poor people as 'rebels.' They may be but imperfectly civilised, but they are lovers of freedom, and are brave and able; and they have been fighting in defence of their homes against people whom they believe to be liars and robbers. England ought to be very sick and ashamed of its Christmas humbug, and its canting adoration of 'The Prince of Peace.'

AN ELECTION OF DISGUST.

THE School Board Progressives have very naturally rejoiced over their victory in London: but in order to soberly comprehend it, it is necessary to observe that they polled about 200,000 votes less than last time. Their victory is really the result of the utter rot of the other side, through the wholesale desertion of the vigorous theologians by their disgusted friends. So far good. The sheep are not as fanatical as the shepherds.

We have been told, in every possible way, that 'the people' want their children taught religion in the Nation's schools, and that they burned with indignation at any proposal to deprive them of that precious privilege. What happened? The

persons who have been saying this for 'the people' are dismissed with contempt. 'The people' simply bolted from the very sight of the polling booth, and left their tearful champions in the lurch. That is solid fact one.

Solid fact two is that the 'Progressive' party is coldly sent in to run the schools: hundreds of thousands of voters declining to cast their vote. What is the meaning of that? Apathy? What! apathy after such a boiling-up of every kettle and pot as London has scarcely ever known? No; it was not apathy; it was disgust.

The right election has yet to come; an election which, for the first time, shall give 'the people' a chance of saying whether the Nation's schools are to be kept for the business of the nation, without the intrusion of a subject which has no proper place in the programme of a State School, and which, while it has a place in that programme, will never cease to vex. This Dr. Clifford admits, for in an 'interview,' reported in *The Daily Chronicle*, this passage occurs;—

Do you think the religious controversy is now over?

No, it is certainly not dead. The Cecilite party will keep it alive. The 'Church Times' and other organs of that party show no abatement in their desire to sectarianise the religious instruction of the Board schools. We shall still have to be vigilant, and see, above all, that nothing is done in a subtle way to injure the compromise.

So, then, we still have 'The religious difficulty' with us, and may have to do the fighting all over again, and over and over again.

‘THE QUEST FOR GOD.’*

MANY will welcome this personal revelation of the thoughts and experiences of one of the apostles of Labour. Many more would welcome it if they only knew how charming a book of travel and adventure were hidden in this keenly interesting volume. Some even of those who know what 'The Labour Church' represents, and what John Trevor had to do with it, may think there was no occasion for the

* 'The Quest for God.' By John Trevor. London: 'The Labour Prophet' Office.

autobiography of its founder. We have a different opinion. We think, indeed, that John Trevor has given us just the book we want. An Essay is one thing; an Apologia is another. An argument may convince; but a life is needed for insight and feeling. So then, apart altogether from John Trevor's life-story and *The Labour Church*, as a book which mirrors much, it is both interesting and valuable.

From this point of view, it is more important even than such books with a motive as 'Robert Elsmere' and 'The Christian' which, after all, had to be controlled by the sensationalism because the artificiality and exaggeration of fiction. Here, on the contrary, the deep emotions and intense thoughts of the time are interpreted 'in spirit and in truth.'

It is an age of extreme unrest and heart-searching. New problems, new wants, new aspirations, new sorrows, new remedies, throb and crowd around us; and the man from whom we want to hear is precisely the man who has gone on pilgrimage amongst them. That John Trevor has done; and we are glad to hear from him, in this book of heart experiences and ardent thoughts.

AMERICA AWAKE.

EVERYWHERE in America the old theology is being transformed, and trials for heresy or threatened trials are as plentiful as mosquitos. A Presbyterian paper, called 'The Occident,' published in San Francisco, writes an indignant and puzzled article on one of the latest cases of heresy, which, however, is being curiously condoned. 'The Christian Register' tells the pleasant story thus;—

It appears that a council of Trinitarian Congregationalists was called in September to consider the propriety of installing Rev. J. A. Curzon as pastor of a church at North Berkeley.

In making the usual doctrinal statement, the candidate professed his belief in Christ, in the Trinity, the Atonement, the Inspiration of the Bible and the Future life, but not at all in orthodox terms. He held to the simple natural humanity of Jesus. 'He is *the man*,—man throughout. As I had a father and mother, so had Jesus.' Into him God entered, as he enters every obedient man. As to the Trinity, it means

God in nature, God in Christ, God in humanity. As to the atonement and redemption, the end of God's government is not justice, but mercy. From love He works out redemption through the discipline of nature. From parental love and sympathy, God, who was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, will continue to suffer so long as there is sin. As to the Bible, it is the product of men inspired, but unequally. The writings are not all of equal worth. We must search, not for authoritative teaching, but to pick out the truth. Truth is found and recognised by consciousness, -- the sixth sense. As to immortality, 'perhaps only those who believe in Christ are immortal.' But the work of saving men does not end at death. For the impenitent there is an awful future. But fire is cleansing, punishment is disciplinary, the work of redeeming love goes on in the next world. 'The Occident,' whose report we here condense, utters this exclamation:—

'For theological crudeness, for inconsistencies, for ignorance of scripture or bold rejection of it, and for wild speculation, we have never seen its equal in any one occupying a pulpit in a church pretending to the least orthodoxy. . . . And, what is far more remarkable, *the Council unanimously sustained the examination as satisfactory!*'

NOTES BY THE WAY.

Subscribers are respectfully invited to send their subscriptions (whether in advance or for 1897) during the month of January to J. P. Hopps, South Norwood Hill, London, S.E.

THE ECHO.—We are rather sorry to hear that the quaint little London *Echo* is being purchased by an enterprising syndicate, with the avowed object of bringing it 'up to date.' We are specially sorry for *that*. 'Up-to-date' means a nasty blend of rowdy exaggeration and pandering to 'sport.' We have always liked the influence of the *Echo*. No one ever accused it of being 'The Thunderer' or anything like it, but it tried hard to be clean and virtuous, humanitarian and sane, and it succeeded. There has always been a sweet old-fashioned flavour of niceness about it, which left a pleasant taste in the mouth. But we will not readily give up the hope that this may be essentially retained.

THREE GOOD WEEKLIES.—We once more commend to all impartial readers three excellent weeklies, each one good in its own sphere;—*Light* (2d.), *The Two Worlds* (1d.) and *The Inquirer* (1d.) They are worth tons of ordinary Church papers. The first two are the generally accepted representatives of Spiritualism in England. *Light* is literary and scientific but always bright and entertaining; *The Two Worlds* is a kind of missionary paper; vivid, informing and popular. *The Inquirer* is the organ of cultivated Unitarianism—good, but with plenty of room for improvement in vigour and grit.

'THE HUMANITARIAN,' referring to Mr. Chamberlain's Brummagem Scotch fanfare on Patriotism, says; '*Civis Romanus*

sum is a proud phrase, and never prouder than when the individual or the nation feels the deep sense of responsibility implied in its use. But this responsibility does not end with one's duty to one's country, but should be extended to the whole world. This higher patriotism, however, Mr. Chamberlain seemed unable to conceive, his view was rather how one nation can extend and enrich itself at the cost of other nations—a narrow view truly, but one characteristic of the man. Narrow-minded statesmen beget a narrow policy. With such men at the helm one ceases to wonder at the deplorable spectacle of Europe armed to the teeth, and England and America at each other's throats eager to magnify some trumpery dispute into a *casus belli*. The truest patriotism is that which teaches interdependence and which shows in the long run that no nation or empire can afford to enrich itself at the expense of its neighbour.'

STILL THAT JUBILEE.—The Society of Friends is sending out, and sowing widely, a circular-letter on the present pernicious army and navy fever. We are glad to see that it sternly reproves the barbaric character of the late Jubilee procession, in the following precise terms;

'It seems as if the arts of peace, on which the prosperity and marvellous progress of this reign have largely rested, were ignored in the warlike character of the procession through London in celebration of the sixtieth year of the Queen's reign.'

It also draws attention to the fact that, in consequence of our grasping professional 'forward policy' we lately had beyond the frontiers an army nearly twice as strong as Wellington had at Waterloo. The pretence of 'defence' is a fraud. Take India. The poor fellows we have murdered in such a cowardly way, with our deadly mechanical contrivances, were engaged in 'defence.'

OUR LONDON PAPERS.—Mr. H. V. Sweringen must be the champion vituperator. In *The Progressive Thinker*, he says; 'I have been endeavouring for a long time to work out by logic, arithmetic, geometry, trigonometry, morality, Christianity, reason and common sense, why it is that many so-called newspapers—moral Christian, decent, respectable, pure, goody-goody newspapers—will most emphatically refuse, with an air of insulted intelligence and injured piety, to print anything upon the subject of Spiritualism, and yet admit to their papers and publish column after column, such low, nasty, groveling, debasing, degrading, brutal, uncivilized, cruel, beastly, heathenish, ignorant, inhuman, drunken, gambling, bawdy-house sporting, barbarous, inexcusable, unwarranted, undesired, wicked, hellish, damnable stuff as a description of a prize-fight in which two sloggers batter each other for money and the test of which one of the two is the greater brute.' Of course, this is a very bad case of swearing, and is scarcely endurable: but the odd thing is that every word of it is true.

WHITE SAVAGES.—The *Cape Times* publishes an interview with Mr. Brown, a Bechuanaland missionary, in which terrible charges are made against the Langeberg force which sup-

pressed the recent rebellion. The chiefs of the villages of Gamapedi and Maiping at the outbreak of hostilities saved a large number of white people from an impi of natives who had come from Mathwaring River with the express object of murdering whites and obtaining ammunition. Upon the report that there were symptoms of rebellion in these villages, a party of burghers, including some Englishmen, went to Gamapedi and shot down the Kaffirs as they were leaving their houses in the early morning, the chief and other leading men being killed. The man who boasted of firing the first shot, says the missionary, had himself been saved by the chief of the village.

QUEER ENGLISH.—Our Londoners are still at it. *The Westminster Gazette* says; 'The Bishop of St. Asaph has certainly taken a bold step in inviting his clergy to come and discuss the way in which he has exercised his patronage at a public meeting.' Now it is certain that the Bishop never once exercised his patronage at a public meeting. What he did was to invite his clergy to discuss, at a public meeting, the way in which he has exercised his patronage.

ROYALTY RUBBISH.—In 'The Tower Hamlet's Mission Record,' we find one of the specimens of royalty rubbish which is responsible for the line we have taken with regard to this business. A very praiseworthy entertainment is given to a vast number of poor children, and 'an allegorical tableaux,' entitled 'Britannia doing homage to our Queen' is performed. Here is the description of it: 'Britannia, surrounded by her court, is acclaimed as the custodian of England's glory, the children singing "Rule Britannia;" the Queen appearing, she recognises in her a more worthy subject of homage, and does homage accordingly, amid the singing of "God Save the Queen."'

'Britannia,' we presume, represents Britain, the nation, the people, that which is independent of Kings and Queens, and will go on without pause when they pass away: and yet here is the lesson taught that the Queen is 'a more worthy subject of homage.' It is the fashion to say so, but it is as unwholesome as it is untrue.

OBSCURATISM EXTRAORDINARY.—Before evidence, *The Pall Mall Gazette* would be about the last print we should suspect of theological obscuratism. But, a short time ago, it gave us an amazing specimen. Reviewing a certain book, it said;—'The object of this book is to supply the want of a history of God's dealings with mankind from the earliest ages, and at the same time to point out the continuity of man's progress towards his destiny. Consequently, we have here a very masterly and comprehensive survey of the progressive revelations of the Deity to His people, from the Creation to the present time.'

Fancy that! 'A history of God's dealings with mankind from the earliest ages.' Why that would be universal history, —the entire history of human evolution. What a wonderful concluding phrase that is, too;—'a comprehensive survey of the progressive revelations of the Deity to His people, from the Creation to the present time!' Who are His people?

BARBARIC LONDON.—About 10,000 persons attended the funeral of the young blackguard who was killed in a prize-fight lately. What did they go for?

NOTES ON BOOKS.

'SATAN'S INVISIBLE WORLD DISPLAYED.' 'The Review of Reviews Annual, 1898.' London: Fleet Street Office. If the awful story told in this book were not based upon and practically extracted from official documents and sworn evidence, one might hope that there was more 'Christmas Annual' in it than serious exposition. But the evidence is, unfortunately, overwhelming: and the evidence reveals a horror of iniquity concerning the government of New York, which must make every honest American sick and miserable. We doubt whether anything on this planet has been just as bad,—anything, that is to say, which professed to be within the pale of civilisation: and it is truly sorrowful that for the most lurid example of government by sheer blackguardism and administration by scientific corruption, we must look to New York as it lately was. Let us hope the exposure will lead to cleansing: let us hope, too, that London will keep its eyes wide open. There is need, especially as regards the playing of the police with prostitution.

The story is brightened with crisp records of personal experiences and impressions and several interesting pictures and portraits.

'THE HELPER. A HANDBOOK FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS AND PARENTS,' 1898. Edited by Marian Pritchard. London: Sunday School Association, Essex Street. A book rich in material for instructive study and interesting talk, from scholarly lessons on the Bible to simple stories about child-life and for children. The book is admirably printed; and a charming portrait of Dr. Martineau greatly adds to its value.

'SUCCESSFUL LIFE.' A Series of Essays by John Dendy. London: The Sunday School Association, Essex Street, Strand. This is not a book of religious commonplaces, and of goody moral conventionalisms. It is a book of searching discriminations, and calm but courageous discussion of the greatest of all concerns belonging to everybody's daily life. It contains eighteen chapters, on such weighty subjects as, The life of the body and the mind, Conscience, The emotions, Love, Freedom, Work, Gambling, Friendship and Marriage, The Sex Question, Recreation, Ideals. It is essentially a creative book, a book for the brain. It has no stories, and sets

no traps for 'interest.' Some might call it 'solemn' and 'dull'; but it is only as 'solemn' as life and as 'dull' as duty, without tinsel and rewards.

'HALF-HOURS WITH THE PARABLES: A CLASS BOOK FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS.' By J. Crowther Hirst. London: The Sunday School Association, Essex Street, Strand. A useful class book of a somewhat conventional kind, but with pleasant bits of poetry and readable stories. The 'moral' is always a trifle too manifest: but it is a good fault, and, in such a book, it is hardly to be avoided. The work is excellently produced, and it is very cheap at 1s. There is in it material that should provide any sort of a teacher with admirable crutches—or, let us say, good food for thought,—for three months.

EVERY DAY WITH THOREAU.

JANUARY.

'ESPECIALLY am I touched by his sufficiency and soundness, his aboriginal vigor,—as if a man had once more come into Nature who knew what Nature meant him to do with her,—Virgil, and White of Selborne, and Izaak Walton, and Yankee Settler all in one.'—BRONSON ALCOTT.

- 1—A year is made up of a certain series and numbers of sensations and thoughts, which have their language in nature. Now I am ice, now I am sorrel.—*Summer*.
- 2—If you would travel farther than all travellers, be naturalised in all climes, and cause the Sphinx to dash her head against a stone, ever obey the precept of the old philosopher and explore thyself.—*Walden*.
- 3—There is something servile in the habit of seeking after a law which we may obey. We may study the laws of matter at and for our convenience, but a successful life knows no law.—*Walking*.
- 4—Unquestionable truth is sweet, though it were the announcement of our dissolution.—*Summer*.
- 5—Men will lie on their backs, talking about the fall of man, and never make an effort to get up.—*Life without Principle*.
- 6—Men esteem truth remote, in the outskirts of the system, behind the farthest star, before Adam and after the last man. In eternity there is indeed something true and sublime. But all these times and places and occasions are now and here. God himself culminates in the present moment and will never be more divine in the lapse of all the ages.—*Walden*.
- 7—It is not worth the while to let our imperfections disturb us always. The conscience really does not, and ought not, to monopolise the whole of our lives, any more than the heart or the head. It is as liable to disease as any other part.—*Week*.

- 8—The man I meet with is not often so instructive as the silence he breaks. . . . My fairies invariably take to flight when a man appears upon the scene.—*Autobiography*.
- 9—This, our respectable daily life, in which the man of common sense, the Englishman of the world, stands so squarely, and on which our institutions are founded, is in fact the veriest illusion, and will vanish like the baseless fabric of a vision; but that faint glimmer of reality which sometimes illuminates the darkness of daylight for all men, reveals something more solid and enduring than adamant, which is in fact the corner-stone of the world.—*Diary*.
- 10—Every man is the builder of a temple, called his body, to the god he worships, after a style purely his own, nor can he get off by hammering marble instead. We are all sculptors and painters, and our material is our own flesh and blood and bones. Any nobleness begins at once to refine a man's features, any meanness or sensuality to imbrute them.—*Walden*.
- 11—If we only see clearly enough how mean our lives are, they will be splendid enough.—*Summer*.
- 12—Love is a severe critic. Hate can pardon more than love. They who aspire to love worthily, subject themselves to an ordeal more rigid than any other.—*Love*.
- 13—We do not avoid evil by fleeing before it, but by rising above or diving below its plane; as the worm escapes drought and frost by boring a few inches deeper.—*Week*.
- 14—If one hesitates in his path, let him not proceed. Let him respect his doubts, for doubts, too, may have some divinity in them. That we have but little faith is not sad, but that we have but little faithfulness. By faithfulness faith is earned.—*Letter*.
- 15—He is the true artist whose life is his material. Every stroke of the chisel must enter his own flesh and bones and not grate dully on marble.—*Summer*.
- 16—With by far the greater part of mankind, religion is a habit; or rather habit is religion. However paradoxical it may seem, it appears to me that to reject religion is the first step towards moral excellence; at least no man ever attained to the highest degree of the latter by any other road.—*Essay*.
- 17—I think that we should be men first and subjects afterwards. It is not desirable to cultivate a respect for the law as much as for the right. Law never made men a whit more just; and, by means of their respect for it, even the well-disposed are daily made the agents of injustice.—*Civil Disobedience*.
- 18—If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them.—*Walden*.

- 19—It is necessary not to be Christian to appreciate the beauty and significance of the life of Christ. I know that some will have hard thoughts of me when they hear their Christ named beside my Buddha, yet I am sure that I am willing they should love their Christ more than my Buddha, for the love is the main thing, and I like him too.—*Week.*
- 20—It is too late to be studying Hebrew; it is more important to understand even the slang of to-day.—*Walking.*
- 21—Love must be as much a light as a flame.
Where there is not discernment, the behaviour even of the purest soul may in effect amount to coarseness.—*Love.*
- 22—It is not enough that we are truthful; we must cherish and carry out high purposes to be truthful about.—*Love.*
- 23—Warm your body by healthful exercise, not by cowering over a stove. Warm your spirit by performing independently noble deeds, not by ignobly seeking the sympathy of your fellows who are no better than yourself.—*Chastity and Sensuality.*
- 24—Read not the Times. Read the Eternities. Conventionalities are at length as bad as impurities. Even the facts of science may dust the mind by their dryness, unless they are in a sense effaced each morning, or rather rendered fertile by the dews of fresh and living truth.—*Life without Principle.*
- 25—It would be a poor story to be prejudiced against the life of Christ because the book has been edited by Christians.—*Week.*
- 26—The philanthropist too often surrounds mankind with the remembrance of his own cast-off griefs as an atmosphere, and calls it sympathy. We should impart our courage, and not our disease, and take care that this does not spread by contagion.—*Walden.*
- 27—Men talk about Bible miracles because there is no miracle in their lives.
Cease to gnaw that crust. There is ripe fruit over your head.—*Summer.*
- 28—Men are in the main alike, but they were made several in order that they might be various. If a low use is to be served, one man will do nearly or quite as well as another; if a high one, individual excellence is to be regarded. Any man can stop a hole to keep the wind away, but no other man could serve so rare a use as the author of this illustration did.—*Walking.*
- 29—How insupportable would be the days, if the night with its dews and darkness did not come to restore the drooping world!—*Night and Moonlight.*
- 30—There can be no profanity where there is no fane behind.—*The Landlord.*
- 31—There is no more fatal blunderer than he who consumes the greater part of his life getting his living.—*Life without Principle.*